



“Stop, report, talk: Be #scamaware” says Citizens Advice Oxfordshire as it finds only 46% of people report scams

64% of people in the South East of England have been approached by a scammer in the last two years finds Citizens Advice Oxfordshire. Worryingly, of those targeted, only 46% of people spoke to anyone about it.

Under the slogan “Stop, report, talk: Be #scamaware” Citizens Advice Oxfordshire and Trading Standards are encouraging people to talk about their experiences and look out for others, particularly more vulnerable people.

More than half of all scams reported to the Citizens Advice consumer service in the last year used well-established, offline methods. These classic tactics from the scammers’ playbook include unsolicited doorstep selling, mail and cold calling, and saw people lose an average of almost £3,000.

Fraudsters using these methods are known to overwhelmingly target older, more vulnerable people.

Pat Coomber-Wood, Chief Officer of Citizens Advice North Oxfordshire & South Northamptonshire said:

“‘Stop, report, talk: Be #scamaware’ is our message to people across Oxfordshire.

“We’re finding that although many people have come into contact with scammers, very few people are speaking up about this issue.

“People can sometimes feel foolish or embarrassed reporting their experiences, but sadly this means perpetrators are getting away scot-free.”

“In reality, all of us can have the bad luck of being targeted with a scam. We hope this Scams Awareness campaign will encourage people to share their stories and learn tips to stop

scammers from running off with people's money."

To help stop more people being fleeced by these types of scams, Citizens Advice Oxfordshire and Trading Standards are sharing the following tips on how to spot them.

If you're worried that someone you know has become victim to a scam, look out for the following. Are they:

- Receiving more mail than usual?
- Receiving unsolicited calls or spending more time on the phone?
- Struggling with money or have they withdrawn large amounts of cash recently?

If you think someone you know is being scammed, take the following steps:

- If you're worried about telephone scams look into installing a call blocker
- Encourage them to tell their bank immediately if there is any suspicious activity or transactions from their account or credit cards
- Report the scam to the Citizens Advice Consumer Service online or by phone on 03454 04 05 06. They will give you advice on what to do next and report the scam to Trading Standards
- Report the scam to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040
- If they're struggling to pay bills or outstanding debts encourage them to visit their local Citizens Advice

You can also take the following steps to safeguard yourself and others:

- Be suspicious if you're contacted out of the blue, even if it's from a name you recognise
- If it sounds too good to be true it probably is
- Never send money to someone you've never met
- Never give out your bank details unless you are certain you can trust the person contacting you
- Don't be rushed – you never need to make a decision straight away and if you feel pressured say "no"
- Suspect a scam? Hang up, wait five minutes to clear the line or use another phone to call
- Don't suffer in silence – speak out about scams

Citizens Advice and Trading Standards are holding events to help people know when they've been targeted with a scam. The event is part of Scams Awareness Month in June, a national campaign encouraging people to report and talk about scams.

The events will take place on:

- 14th June Witney Library 2 – 4pm Drop in for advice and information sharing
- 18th June Carterton Library 2 – 4pm Drop in for advice and information sharing
- 10th-14th June Oxford Library
- 10th-14th June Banbury Library
- 10th-14th June Wantage Library
- 17th-21st June Didcot & Abingdon Library
- 20-22nd June Bampton Library
- 29th June Bicester Town Carnival

-ends-

We give people the knowledge and confidence they need to find their way forward - whoever they are, and whatever their problem.

Notes to editors:

1. 19,496 potential scam cases were reported to the Citizens Advice consumer service in 2018, an 8% increase on the 18,075 reported in 2017. All figures in relation to total number of scams relate to year-on-year data.
2. Further analysis of data relates to the Citizens Advice consumer service figures between July and September 2018.
3. Citizens Advice commissioned Populus who conducted an online sample of 2,016 GB adults 18+ between 24th and 27th May 2019. Data is weighted to be representative of the population of Great Britain. Targets for quotas and weights are taken from the National Readership Survey, a random probability F2F survey conducted annually with 34,000 adults. Populus is a founder member of the British Polling Council and abides by its rules. For further information see <http://www.britishpollingcouncil.org/>
4. Figures regarding demographic makeup of those affected by scams can be found in [Citizens Advice 2017 research 'Changing the story on scams.'](#)
5. Citizens Advice is made up of the national charity Citizens Advice; the network of independent local Citizens Advice charities across England and Wales; the Citizens Advice consumer service; and the Witness Service.
6. Our network of charities offers impartial advice online, over the phone, and in person, for free. We helped 2.7 million people face to face, over the phone, by email and webchat in 2018-19. And we had 29 million visits to our website. For full service statistics see [our monthly publication Advice trends](#).
7. Citizens Advice service staff are supported by more than 21,000 trained volunteers, working at over 2,600 service outlets across England and Wales.
8. You can get consumer advice from the Citizens Advice consumer service on 03454 04 05 06 or 03454 04 05 05 for Welsh language speakers

Ends.

To find out more, please get in touch with Judy Anders, Communications Officer at Citizens Advice Oxfordshire on judy.anders@citizensadvicewestoxon.org.uk

www.caox.org.uk

Helping people find a way forward, whoever they are and wherever they are

For more information contact: Please do not print the details below:

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